

not look to it for a "blueprint" for a revolution when there is a great exemplar from the African-American and African Diasporan history.

[From the *Africana Heritage*, Apr. 24, 2006]

CORNEL WEST AND PANEL TALK HIP-HOP  
ACTIVISM

On Monday, April 24, 2006 the Schomburg Center held the third of four programs in its Leadership Forum Series: Higher Pursuits hosted and moderated by Dr. Cornel West. The focus of the discussion was "A Hip-Hop Revolution?" and featured guest panelists Dr. Marc Lamont Hill, Assistant Professor of Urban Education at Temple University; Dr. Imani Perry, Associate Professor at Rutgers Law School and author of *Prophets of the Hood: Politics and Poetics in Hip-Hop*; Carlito Rodriguez, Producer Consultant at BET News and former Editor-in-Chief of *The Source* magazine; Akiba Solomon, Senior Editor at *Vibe*; Vixen and Co-Editor of *Naked: Black Women Bare All About Their Skin, Hair, Hips, Lips, and Other Body Parts*; and Greg Tate, author of *Everything But the Burden: What White People are Taking from Black Culture and long-time contributor to the Village Voice*.

Dr. West gave each of the panelists time to address the issue of whether Hip-Hop music has any revolutionary potential. According to Carlito Rodriguez, people often have a very romantic view about Hip-Hop and its influence, but he reminded the audience that he grew up in the Bronx during the music's toddler years and everything about the culture wasn't necessarily a good thing. "I don't subscribe to the revisionist history that everybody and everything in Hip-Hop was positive. It began with acts like Run-DMC who went from looking like Parliament Funkadelic to [wearing] street gear. It soon became 'I want that chain, that car' and somewhere along the line, that became the norm. I think someone has to make music that caters to me—grown man rap." Rodriguez emphasized that the lyrics today don't really address the many issues he faces as a man in his late 30s.

Dr. Marc Lamont Hill, who is currently working on several book projects regarding Hip-Hop culture, made a very important distinction. "The question mark at the end of 'A Hip-Hop Revolution?' is so critical. Is Hip-Hop a revolutionary form, born out of resistance? Yes. Is it in content? I'm not sure." Dr. Hill added, "When someone looks at a rapper like Lil' Kim as a feminist role model, there is a [disconnect] with the message of Hip-Hop not engaging listeners in the day-to-day politics of the 'hood.'"

Writer Greg Tate was more optimistic on what the future could bring as far as leadership. "I know it has never really been about Hip-Hop; it has always been [about] black people's way to transform their world," explains Tate. "The culture spits [out] the prophets, the leaders, to get us through the

next plateau of our struggles. The future of Hip-Hop is in a maternity ward somewhere. The answer to the crisis is a voice we haven't heard before, but because we can imagine it, it probably exists."

Dr. Imani Perry believes that a community-based approach seems more realistic than a creative one. "Hip-Hop doesn't exist as a viable social movement, but its music generates courage. I am more interested in the community providing a social justice movement." Editor and journalist Akiba Solomon put things rather bluntly: "my short answer to the question [about Hip-Hop being revolutionary] is 'no.' I've gone through a lot with Hip-Hop; I compare it to an abusive marriage. Every time it punches me in my face—it gives me gifts. Hip-Hop has been used as a euphemism for different things. It's important that we define what we're talking about and whom we're talking about. My mid-80s view is that I think we are talking about predominately black and Latino youth who come from a certain class or struggle. But I think a major piece that is missing is that you cannot have an art form have any social change potential when it objectifies or minimizes half the population."

Dr. West offered closing thoughts: "Latinos and blacks have so many resources, but they still don't have total control of it. Hip-Hop is a global phenomenon and it has a different context in other countries like Bolivia and Colombia." Unlike those countries, Hip-Hop here in the United States can often be more degrading than it is uplifting. But one thing that all the panelists, Dr. West included, agreed on is that society's ills will not be changed by a song or a performer, but by small pockets of people doing their best to make a difference. And while Hip-Hop can sometimes provide the soundtrack to a movement, no one should look to it for a blueprint, when there is so much more from African-American and African Diasporan history that could provide that sort of guidance.

“YES” TO STEM CELL RESEARCH

HON. MARTIN T. MEEHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 20, 2006

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, 5 years ago, President Bush said that stem cell research raised "profound ethical questions." There is no more profound or ethical question than the fate of 100 million American lives. Lives that can be saved, and lives that will be lost if we don't move forward with this vital research.

This Congress sent the White House a bipartisan bill that ethically advances stem cell

research—a practice supported by over 70 percent of Americans. Stem cell research may one day provide a cure for Alzheimer's, juvenile diabetes, Lou Gehrig's disease, and spinal cord injuries.

The promise of this research is enormous, but regrettably, the President used his first veto to deny hope to millions of Americans whose lives could be improved by stem cell research. The answer to this profound ethical question is clear—yes to stem cell research would mean yes to saving lives.

32ND ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
TURKISH INVASION OF CYPRUS

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 20, 2006

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 32nd anniversary of the Turkish Invasion of Cyprus. Although this event took place 32 years ago, the situation is still one that demands attention and strong intervention today.

In 1974 Turkish military forces invaded the Greek island of Cyprus thereby disrupting the lives of its citizens. In two waves, Turkey was able to seize control of more than one-third of the Island by labeling the invasion as a "peace keeping operation." As a result, Northern Cyprus was divided by a 113 mile barbed fence, which thereby prevented Cypriots from visiting areas and communities within their country.

Turkish presence on the island of Cyprus is in clear violation of repeated U.N. Security Council Resolutions. There are currently 35,000 Turkish troops illegally stationed in Cyprus as it continues to remain one of the most militarized areas in the world. As a result of the invasion over 250,000 Greek Cypriots were subject to ethnic cleansing in Northern Cyprus.

I would like to commend Congressman BILIRAKIS and Congresswoman MALONEY for bringing this issue to a forefront in Congress. I sincerely hope that we will see a better day when the people of Cyprus who have been disenfranchised will receive proper treatment and regard.

Again, I want to express my support for the true government of Cyprus, and I urge the United States government, the European Union and the United Nations to continue efforts in finding a solution to this unfortunate predicament.